4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

hear him. He offers her sweets which have been left there purposely, but still she heeds him not. This comedy may, if the bridegroom be timid and the bride reserved, be prolonged until the third evening after the marriage, in which case the courage and virtue of the bride are extolled by the women in song. On the third evening, however, custom requires the bride to respond to her husband's advances. On the three days following the wedding the bride, dressed as before, stands like a statue in the reception-room to receive the women visitors who flock to the house in order to inspect her.

The ceremonies attending the nuptials of the mountain people are almost precisely similar to those customary in the towns, with the exception that the bride is not veiled when conducted to her husband's home. A romantic reserve, however, surrounds the interviews between the young couple, who, especially if the husband be one of a numerous family and have no private apartments, can only meet in secret until they have children of their own. The mountaineers cherish this custom, which, they contend, by surrounding with a halo of romance and mystery the relations of the young couple, tends to keep their love for each other fresh and warm. The wedding processions of the Moslems and Christians are only to be distinguished by the more picturesque effect of those of the former. Many of the company, dressed in rich apparel glittering with gold embroidery, accompany the bride on horseback, indulging as they go, whenever they arrive at a spot sufficiently spacious, in the manly old Osmanli game of throwing the *djerid*, or spear. Pistols

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EG1 Albania EG1

railing at him, threatened to make him set up a separate home, which would reduce both him and her to a lower level of comfort. Custom, it is true, under the stress of hard necessity, sanctioned his working alongside her in the fields, but only on condition that he did not indulge in unnecessary or frivolous conversation with her. The only explanation which Albanians offered of these restrictions was that a husband and a wife felt 'ashamed' in each other's presence. The same feeling existed all over the Balkans until they came under strong western influences a generation ago. Before that every decorous peasant bride, whatever her race or religion, refrained for several years after her marriage from speaking at all to her husband in public and spoke to him in whispers only in private, meanwhile keeping her eyes modestly downcast. This behaviour seems to originate in an idea which is prevalent throughout the Near East. The Greeks say that since only the celibate life is really holy, the matrimonial state is one of sin and therefore of shame. In I Cor. vii, 8, St Paul voiced it when he wrote, 'I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I'. Moslems, too, believe this, in spite of many being polygamists. There is, for instance, a married as well as a celibate branch of the Bektashi Order of dervishes, but it has so few supporters that at the central monastery at Haci Bektas in the heart of Asia Minor its headquarters are little more than a poverty-stricken excrescence on the enormous, wealthy headquarters of the celibates, and in Albania it has only the monastery at Qesarakë in the south-east, compared with the seventy maintained for the celibates in different parts of the country.

Now the Unwritten Law of Albania ordained that every married woman had the right to visit her own relatives at least once a year. Since these frequently lived in a different village, she could not travel to or from them without an escort, which neither custom nor the law allowed her husband to provide in person. Since brothers were everywhere allowed to talk to each other's wives, no difficulty arose in a communal household, where any man except the husband could accompany a wife to her parents' home and fetch her back. In a house with only one man matters were more complicated. If his mother were alive and physically fit for the journey, she might go with his wife, but who would then cook his supper and prepare his bed for the night? If his mother were dead

2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
Albania EG1

Women and the Moral Standard

361 sheep's heads, and every conceivable kind of foodstuff both
[562] animate and inanimate. Here the only women to be seen are peasants with loads of grass and fodder, or gipsies with bags slung across their shoulders and distaffs in their hands, for it is not considered respectable for women to walk in the main streets of the town, though in the more secluded parts you may occasionally meet high-heeled Mohammedan ladies whose veils do not quite hide the fact that they are smartly dressed in the European fashion.

562 One rarely sees men and women together in Albania, and
831 in consequence one gets the impression, rightly or wrongly, that the company of women is not valued, and that women are regarded only as household drudges and the mothers of children. Nevertheless—or perhaps on this account—the standard of morality is high both in Albania and throughout the Balkans, and breaches of the moral code are rare. In all uncivilised and half-civilised communities the same characteristic is observable, for a wife is regarded as property just as much as a sheep or a bullock or a house, and it is the primitive man's first instinct to keep his property inviolate. Doubtless the women as well as the men have come to regard this point of view as normal, and it is to this, together with a healthy fear of the consequences which any lapse must inevitably bring, that the chastity of the Balkan women is chiefly to be attributed, though a simple religious faith accepted without questioning may also play some part.
831 At all events, whatever the reason, the fact remains that the standard of conduct is, in this particular, higher in the

2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
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To the Land of the Eagle

831/ Balkans than in more civilised and cultured parts of Europe, and the following true story attests to the lengths to which men are prepared to go in order to maintain the code.

628 577 931 A young peasant of Epirus who had only recently taken a wife had to go to the war. On leaving he placed her in the care of his brother, charging him by everything he held sacred to guard her honour as if it were his own. On his return, a few years later, he found that the trust had been betrayed—and by the brother himself—and that his wife was about to become a mother. The primitive peasant code demanded the death of both the guilty parties, and the soldier killed his wife with his own hand, but before he could go in pursuit of his brother, who had fled to the mountains, was arrested by the gendarmerie. At the subsequent trial he was sentenced to fifteen year's imprisonment—a sentence which is still unexpired. The man who told me the story said that he paid a visit to the gaol and had an interview with the prisoner, who at first stated that there had been a reconciliation between his brother and himself. The visitor, who knew that this could not possibly be true, said, "Why do you lie to me?" And, as the man remained silent, continued, "I know that you will go back when you are free and kill your brother. And what will be the use of that? It will only mean another long term of imprisonment."

The prisoner nodded. "Yes", he said. "But when my imprisonment is over I shall once more be able to live honourably amongst my own people."

Until, therefore, the disgrace has been wiped out by the

2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
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blood of his brother this man cannot take his rightful position in the family or in the community to which he belongs, and rather than be an outcast and scorned by his people he is prepared to spend a great part of his life in gaol. Such is the Balkan code of honour.

At Koritza I found that the money in circulation was no longer Italian. Here, as at Tirana, one transacted business with the krone (or crown) instead of with the lira, as at Durazzo, Valona, Argyrocastron and in the South generally. The currency, moreover, was entirely metal, and consisted, in addition to the Austrian krone itself, of Turkish silver coins, Greek silver drachmae, Serbian dinars, and so forth—the basis being gold. There are no banks, but there are money-changers who are always quite willing to cash British or American notes, and who have drawers full to the brim with gold—French napoleons, English sovereigns and half-sovereigns, and American five-dollar pieces. I had not seen so much gold at one time since the old days before the war when bank cashiers in English used to gather it up from the counter by the shovelful.

The absence of banks must, one would imagine, be a considerable hindrance to the commercial development of a country. Nevertheless it is remarkable how little difference it seems to make in Albania, and I began to wonder whether banks are, after all, as essential as we are prone to think. It was likely, however, at the time of which I am writing, that an Albanian bank would shortly be established with headquarters at Tirana. A proposal had been made by the